

Weather Reporter" in the 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, and 2006 competitions, and the Mobile Press Club has named him the "Best Weather Anchor" several times.

In recognition of his remarkable accomplishments, The Press Club of Mobile awarded John Edd its 2005 John Harris Achievement Award, an award presented to a member of the news media "who has made a consistently excellent contribution over a period of time." The Mobile County Commission recently declared 2009 as "The Year of John Edd."

A prolific songwriter, John Edd is one of the founding members of the Mobile Songwriters. He is a member of the Nashville Songwriters Association International and a member of the board of the Frank Brown Songwriters Festival. John Edd also wrote the fight song for the University of South Alabama.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing a dedicated community leader and friend to many throughout Alabama. On behalf of all those who have benefited from his good heart and generous spirit, permit me to extend thanks for his many efforts in making Mobile and south Alabama a better place. John Edd Thompson is an outstanding example of the quality of individuals who have devoted their lives to the field of broadcast journalism.

On behalf of a grateful community, I wish him the best of luck in all his future endeavors.

IN SUPPORT OF THE BILL OF RIGHTS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH OF SAN MATEO COUNTY

HON. JACKIE SPEIER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 05, 2009

Ms. SPEIER. Madam Speaker, today I rise to applaud the Peninsula Partnership Leadership Council and the San Mateo County Youth Commission for their inspired work in creating the Bill of Rights for Children and Youth of San Mateo County. I especially want to thank Youth Commissioner James B. Pollack for his articulate and passionate presentation of the Bill of Rights when the groups visited with me last month.

This ground-breaking document was born from the shared belief that all young people—regardless of race, gender, disability, economic status or other identifying characteristic—should be allowed to grow and blossom to their fullest potential, experiencing the joy, wonder and happiness that so many of us remember from our own childhoods.

The Bill of Rights reads:

"We resolve to invest in all children and youth so that:

They have a healthy mind, body and spirit that enable them to maximize their potential;

They develop a healthy attachment to a parent, guardian or caregiver and an ongoing relationship with a caring and supportive adult;

Their essential needs are met—nutritious food, shelter, clothing, healthcare and accessible transportation;

They have a safe and healthy environment, including homes, schools, neighborhoods and communities;

They have access to a 21st century education that promotes success in life, in future careers and a love of life-long learning;

They have training in life skills that will prepare them to live independently, be self-sufficient and contribute to their community;

They have employment opportunities with protections from unfair labor practices;

They have freedom from mistreatment, abuse and neglect;

They have a voice in matters that affect them;

They have a sense of hope for their future."

Madam Speaker, in our democratic system of government, we are taught to believe that all voices are heard equally. But most 12-year-olds don't have a lobbyist and few tables in the halls of power make room for families. That is why the work of the Peninsula Partnership Leadership Council and the San Mateo County Youth Commission and the principles laid out in the Bill of Rights for Children and Youth are so vitally important.

HONORING THE SERVICE OF MR. CLIFF DODSON, SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS IN BUNCOMBE COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA

HON. HEATH SHULER

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 5, 2009

Mr. SHULER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Mr. Cliff Dodson on his impending retirement.

For the past nine years, Mr. Dodson has served our community as the Superintendent of Buncombe County Schools. As Superintendent, Mr. Dodson has demonstrated his dedication to quality education and has ardently worked to improve educational opportunities for all children. Through his dedication and commitment to education, Mr. Dodson has helped shape the future of Western North Carolina.

He began his service to education thirty-eight years ago as a science and physical education teacher. He has continued to work tirelessly on behalf of children in various roles as an educator, as an Assistant Principal, as a Principal, and for the past twenty-three years as a public school Superintendent.

Mr. Dodson proven himself an accomplished public servant by successfully overseeing the educational direction of over 25,000 students and effectively administering a budget of almost a quarter of a million dollars. Due to his outstanding efforts he has been recognized by the North Carolina Association of Educators as Superintendent of the Year.

I deeply appreciate that under his direction during these difficult economic times, Buncombe County has ensured that 12,000 students can receive free or reduced-price hot cafeteria meals. He has certainly set an admirable example for future public servants who follow in his path.

Mr. Dodson has also served on the Board of Directors for numerous education-based organizations including the United Way, Children First, and the North Carolina School Administrators Association. In addition to his service in the field of education, as an honored veteran, Mr. Dodson earned the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry for his service as a United States Marine.

Madam Speaker, I am proud to honor Mr. Cliff Dodson today and I want to thank him for

his invaluable contributions to the Western North Carolina educational community and to wish him well in his retirement.

RECOGNIZING NATIONAL TEACHER APPRECIATION WEEK

HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 5, 2009

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor our Nation's teachers during National Teacher Appreciation Week, which is being held this year May 3rd–9th.

This is a time to express our thanks and admiration for the more than 3 million teachers in the United States. I encourage everyone to express their appreciation for those teachers who have touched their lives or the lives of their children.

Teachers are heroes in our communities, shaping the next generation of great minds. No great leader, scientist, or artist would be where they are today without the influence of caring and dedicated teachers.

Thurgood Marshall once said, "None of us got where we are solely by pulling ourselves up by our bootstraps. We got here because somebody—a parent, a teacher, an Ivy League crony or a few nuns—bent down and helped us pick up our boots."

There is perhaps no other occupation that influences the fabric of our society more than teachers, and we are fortunate to have this week dedicated to recognizing their contributions.

I am particularly proud of our teachers from my home State of Texas—serving as motivators and mentors for our future leaders. I remain dedicated to working in Congress to ensure that Texas teachers and all teachers have the resources necessary to successfully prepare our Nation's youth for a successful future.

INTRODUCTION OF "THE ENERGY INDEPENDENCE NOW ACT OF 2009"

HON. DAN BURTON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 5, 2009

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Madam Speaker, I rise today to introduce a bill titled, "The Energy Independence Now Act of 2009."

Few things affect American consumers like high energy prices. During the summer of 2008 with the price of oil hovering near \$150 a barrel, Americans faced record prices at the gas pump—in many cases well over \$4.00 per gallon. These high prices contributed to a downturn in economic growth, an increase in inflation and forced many American families to make difficult financial choices. According to the latest figures from the Energy Information Administration, gasoline prices are down to around \$2 per gallon and the price of oil is close to \$50 per barrel. Though the price of gasoline has decreased significantly, many are still concerned that it will rise again and quite possibly because of the disproportionate amount of oil that we import from regimes that are unfriendly to us.